



(cont.)

This allows students to choose up to eight elective credits. Other schedules like block schedules and trimesters also will provide students with this opportunity.

Planning is key -- Students pursuing a specialized area of study, such as music or science, should work closely with a school counselor to ensure they develop an Educational Development Plan that will accommodate their interests.

Q: Are special education students required to complete the Michigan Merit Curriculum?

A. Special Education students are general education students first, and by law, must be given access to, and support for success in, the general curriculum. Studies show all students learn and achieve more when they take a challenging curriculum rather than low-level courses.

All students receiving special education services in Michigan must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that details the appropriate education plan outlining modifications, accommodations, and support for student success.

In addition, the law allows a parent or legal guardian to request a personal curriculum for the student that modifies a limited number of the Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements.

Q: What can parents do to help students succeed with this new curriculum?

A. Expect your child to achieve and succeed. The more you expect, the more they will learn.

Beginning in seventh grade, students should work with their school to develop a career and high school planning document called an Educational Development Plan (EDP). The EDP will help guide their scheduling choices and explore various career pathways.

Get involved and stay involved. When parents are actively involved, kids do better in school. Be a partner with each teacher. Teachers need your cooperation to do a first-class job. Together, you can help your child have a great school year. Help your child establish a study routine in a quiet area at home. Most importantly, be supportive.

For more information visit the Michigan Department of Education high school web page at www.mi.gov/highschool.

State Now Offers Free ACT

As of Spring 2007, Michigan high school juniors will say goodbye to the MEAP (Michigan Educational Assessment Plan) and hello to the Michigan Merit Exam (MME). Unlike the MEAP, though, this new test not only combines several tests into one, it may save your family time and money. For the first time, it will provide students with:

- A free ACT college entrance exam score that can be used to apply to college. In other words, you no longer have to pay to have your child take the ACT. Students also are allowed one retake at no charge.
- A free ACT WorkKeys assessment that connects work skills, training, and testing to improve students' education and job opportunities. For more information visit www.mi.gov/mme.

Michigan Merit Curriculum High School Graduation Requirements

Making the Most Of High School



What you need to know about Michigan's NEW High School Graduation Requirements

608 W. Allegan
Lansing, MI 48933
www.mi.gov/highschool



Helping All Students Succeed

Making Learning Count



Expect More

Getting students prepared and ready to take their place in the world is challenging. The knowledge and skills that were needed to enter college or land a well-paying job 10 or 20 years ago have changed.

Today, there is little difference between the skills students need to enter college or those needed for the workplace.

One thing is for certain, all parents want their children to be able to enter college without having to take costly remedial courses, as well as, secure a good job.

Achieve More

Just as world-class athletes continue to break records once thought unbreakable, high school students are becoming more and more capable of mastering the subjects and concepts needed to be successful in our global economy.

To ensure every student in Michigan is prepared for college, technical training, or the workplace after high school graduation, on April 20, 2006, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm signed into law one of the most comprehensive sets of state high school graduation requirements in the nation.

It is called the Michigan Merit Curriculum. These graduation requirements are effective beginning with students entering 8th grade in 2006.

The Michigan Merit Curriculum will:

-- Increase students' opportunity of getting scholarships, going to college and getting better jobs, pay and promotions.

-- Provide students the flexibility to select additional electives like arts or career training while in high school.

-- Allow students to earn high school credits before entering high school by testing-out of classes, through Advance Placement, Dual Enrollment, Career and Technical Education programs, summer school, and other local elective options.

-- Allow school districts to continue to set additional graduation requirements, make all staffing and scheduling decisions, award diplomas, etc.

New Requirements -- Among Best in Nation

The new Michigan Merit Curriculum requires students to complete 16 specific state credits for graduation. In addition, in order to compete in a global market, students will need an online learning course or experience and two world language credits while in elementary, middle or high school or have an equivalent learning experience beginning with students entering third grade in 2006.

These requirements, for the first time in Michigan history, will provide students with a common set of graduation requirements and will provide educators with a common understanding of what students should know and be able to do for credit.

Prior to these new requirements, all school districts had graduation requirements, but the number and type of credits varied widely throughout the state. The only state requirement was one semester of Civics.

The Michigan Merit Curriculum High School

Graduation Requirements

Effective Beginning with Students
Entering 8th Grade in 2006

4 Credits - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

English Language Arts 9, English Language Arts 10, English Language Arts 11, English Language Arts 12

4 Credits - MATHEMATICS

Geometry, Algebra I, Algebra II, one math or math-related course in final year of high school

3 Credits - SCIENCE

Biology, Chemistry or Physics, one additional science credit

3 Credits - SOCIAL STUDIES

World History & Geography, U.S. History & Geography, .5 credits in both Civics and Economics

1 Credit - PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH

1 Credit - VISUAL, PERFORMING and APPLIED ARTS

ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

2 Credits - LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH

In grades 9-12; OR an equivalent learning experience in grades K-12 (beginning with students entering 3rd grade in 2006.)



Just the Facts

Answers to Frequently Asked
Questions

Q: *How will this affect students?*

A: For many students who already plan on taking the credits required in the Michigan Merit Curriculum, things will change very little with one exception; students may now earn graduation credits prior to entering high school.

Students will continue to be able to earn credit through Career and Technical Education courses; by testing out; through online courses or Dual Enrollment college classes not offered by their high school; and lots of other ways. Check with your high school or school district to learn how.

For other students, it may change the courses they plan to take and may introduce them to new subjects such as Algebra or Biology.

Q: *Can I still take the electives I want?*

A: While the Michigan Merit Curriculum requires 16 credits, an average six period schedule provides students with a total 24 possible credits.

(cont.)